

MODERN BREAKFAST;

OR,

ALL ASLEEP AT NOON.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL,

IN THE

HAYMARKET.

LONDON;

Printed for J. DEBRETT, opposite Burlington House, Piccadilly.

M.DCC.XC.

[Price ONE SHILLING.]

MODERN BREAKFAST

ALL ASSEMBLY AT NOON



TO MRS. PIOZZI.

MADAM,

THOUGH assured of my own inability to offer any thing worthy of your perusal, yet my firm knowledge of your kindness and generosity, has inspired me with courage (I hope it will not be called by so harsh a name as presumption) to lay the ensuing trifle at your feet. I am confident that my youth, and the motives by which I was induced to commence scribbler, will prove a sufficient excuse for any faults that may occur in the few following sheets. It is ever the property of true genius, and refined merit, to look with candor on the efforts of inexperience; if, therefore, you condescend to accept of this little fly, which has not been
thought

thought unworthy of being broken upon the
wheel,

——“An honour that I dreamt not of,”——
every motive will be gratified.

With the greatest respect,
I have the honour to subscribe myself,

MADAM,

Your most obedient,

very humble servant,

Gower Street.

HENRY SIDDONS.

P R O.

P R O L O G U E,

By Mr. JOHN TAYLOR,

CRITICS, for once your dread decrees suspend,
And strive to prove (hard task) a Poet's friend;
The timid, trembling, inexperienced wight,
Who for your favour humbly sues to-night,
Can urge one plea that should disarm your spleen,
For know, great censors, he is scarce fifteen.
The awful sages of the law we find,
Are to the youthful culprits always kind,
And rather charge the first offences still
On erring judgement, than corrupted will.
With pity, then, behold this early crime,
Nor doom him dead ere yet he reach his prime,
But nobly leave him to reforming Time.

Ladies, you're bound to judge by gentle laws,
And own the fault is sanction'd by the cause:
'Tis Love, alas! has led the stripling wrong—
Charm'd by the Muse, and her enchanting song.
The Muse, with all her sex's magic sway,
Has ever drawn the tender heart astray:
Ah! since so soon allur'd by FEMALE wiles,
Here should his hopes be cheer'd by female smiles;
Oh then, ye fair, your soft protection give,
And our young bard shall spite of critics live:
Forgive him, beaux, if he, like other fools,
Vulgar, should swerve from fashion's nicer rules,
Sporting no tassell'd knee, no swoln cravat,
No booted ancle, and no chimney hat;
Yet in the Muse he loves a charming jade,
And gallantry's at least a modish trade;

But

But if the dragons, breathing hostile flame,
 Who watch th' Hesperian fruit of letter'd fame,
 Deny'd themselves the tempting food to taste,
 Would envious keep from him the rich repast;
 If females too, his tender plea should slight,
 Or harder still, with critic foes unite,
 Because, neglecting each terrestrial fair,
 He madly woos a beauty of the air;
 If beaux should rashly hiss ere yet they know
 Whether his cape's too high, or skirt too low;
 Whether in gross expansion glares his face,
 Or well-bred whiskers spread a grisly grace,
 And scarce allow the imprison'd nose a place:
 Let gen'rous sympathy his cause defend—
 Th' attempt was kindly made to serve a friend:
 Sure then a British audience will assign
 One sprig of bays to bloom on Friendship's shrine.
 So may that sprig, plac'd by your partial care,
 Not with'ring drop, but rise and flourish there,
 Till spreading strong, with life's advancing morn,
 The moral stage it shelter and adorn:
 Then while the Muse imparts her plastic aid,
 And virtue consecrates the votive shade,
 Th' exulting bard shall own with grateful pride,
 Your soft'ring zeal the genial force supply'd.

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Mr. Hammond,</i>	<i>Mr. Iliff.</i>
<i>Morecraft.</i>	<i>Mr. Moss.</i>
<i>Delmar,</i>	<i>Mr. Bannister, jun.</i>
<i>Risk,</i>	<i>Mr. Evatt.</i>
<i>Sir Ambrose Crab,</i>	<i>Mr. Kemble.</i>

W O M E N.

<i>Miss Oglewell,</i>	<i>Mrs. Whitfield.</i>
<i>Lucy,</i>	<i>Mrs. Heard.</i>
<i>Mrs. Hammond.</i>	<i>Mrs. Kemble.</i>

MODERN BREAKFAST.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Morecraft House.*

A table, with books, paper, &c.

Morecraft and Delmar discovered.

Morecraft, (rising.)

ZOUNDS! I say that——

Delm. Yes, Sir, and I say that my conscience——

Mor. Your conscience! O Sir, very well, very well! And so I have provided for you like a gentleman, and now the only return you can make, is by talking of your conscience. 'Slood! did you ever know me think about conscience?

Delm. Never in my life, Sir.

Mor. Very well, then. Now let us come to a reckoning. You know your father, when I first became acquainted with him, was quite, as one may say, oppressed with riches.

Delm. Yes, Sir, and you being his friend, kindly made shift to ease him of his burden.

Mor. Young man, no sneers. I know I lent him money, and was not fool enough to part with it for nothing. He was always a gamester, and I foretold his end.

B

Delm.

Delm. Pray, Sir, consider my feelings.

Mor. Feelings! why, zounds! I never had any feelings, and pray why should you? Feelings indeed! Either have done with this romantic nonsense, Sir, or take yourself and your feelings out of my house.

Delm. Sir, hear me; ever since I have been under your roof, I have made your commands my laws, and even now, Sir, since you insist on my compliance, I am ready to obey you.

Mor. (*taking out a purse.*) Give me your hand.—Depend upon it, honesty is a mere gewgaw; I was once myself rank'd in a class of what the world calls honest men, but as soon as I found honesty an enemy to riches, I turned that and my beggarly companions out of my doors together.

Delm. But you were speaking of Mr. Hammond.

Mor. Aye, aye! I've serv'd him the best trick I ever play'd in my whole life. His wife began to perceive the depredations that I made upon the fortune of her husband, and was growing troublesome. I then made bold to introduce the girl to his acquaintance who now resides with him; this raised the lady's jealousy; high words took place, and a separation was the consequence.

Delm. Barbarous monster! (*aside.*) But pray, Sir, when you strike such bold strokes, how do you manage to prevent detection?

Mor. Oh, by assuming the mask of friendship.—I conceal the defects of the mind, as the ladies hide those of the person, by putting on an artificial face upon the occasion. You are acquainted with the means I took to draw him into play. His extravagance soon obliged him to borrow from my stock; and this pocket-book, which contains the reversion of his uncle's estate, (and which the wife, in a fit of generous love, empowered him to sell, for the old fellow, very wisely, foreseeing his nephew's extravagance, had made his will in her favour;) this, I say, was my security. There it is, I commit it to your charge,

charge, and take care of it. Should the uncle hear how very wisely they have already disposed of his estate, he would certainly disappoint them, by making another will; and their disappointment would be a grievous affliction to me, I promise you.

[Exit Morecraft.

Delm. Yes, I will take it, and to your confusion. I am not yet the villain you imagine me; the world shall know you. Poverty can bring no curse so great as this—to purchase daily bread by daily infamy!—My father fell the dupe of his devices—I by his arts fell lower than—— Away, degrading thought!—But stay—I had almost slipp'd my appointment with my unknown fair one. The trifling debt I paid for her, will be doubly restored, if she deigns by her smiles to drive away the mists of trouble that perplex me.

[Exit Delmar.

SCENE II. *Hammond House.*

Sir Ambrose Crab and Risk.

Sir Amb. At breakfast, you say. A very pretty hour, upon my word. It is now half past twelve o'clock, yet even the servants, by their yawning and rubbing of their eyes, seem as if they had just risen from their beds.

Risk. Ah, Sir! London has done wonders. Since my master has been here, he keeps late hours, runs into every extravagance.—Ask him the reason, and he can give you no other answer, but that it is the fashion.

Sir Amb. The fashion! A puppy! How dare he talk of fashion! Go bid him fashion out a fortune for himself. Why, when I was a young man, though all the ladies declared they never saw a finer figure, or a greater air of nobility, than mine; yet for all that, Sunday morning excepted, I never was in bed after six o'clock, in the whole course of my life.

Risk. Sir, I told him so, but he answer'd times are alter'd now, besides, my uncle follow'd a profession—

Sir Amb. Aye the most glorious of all professions, a British officer. And if I might have had my will, my nephew should have trod the footsteps of his ancestors, and not staid loitering here at home like an idle drone, preying on the labours of an industrious hive; bid him do some service to his country, or I renounce him. I shall always be ready to run any lengths for his satisfaction and honour, but at the same time, I have a spirit that will never condescend to support whim or encourage idleness—
(*a bell rings.*)

Risk. Hark, Sir, my mistress's bell rings; I am sure my master will be transported to see you.

[*Exit Risk.*

Sir Amb. Sure there never was such a place as this cursed town; nothing should have brought me to it, but to congratulate my nephew and his new married lady, though I am sure, while I am wishing them joy with one eye the other will overflow with tears for the death of his poor Adelina. Well, Heaven forgive me for it, but ever since I lost my wife I can't help reproaching fate for taking first the best of human beings; and instead of marrying again, the sight of a deserving woman almost breaks my heart, as it never fails to call to my remembrance my poor dear Margaret.

Enter Risk.

Risk. Sir, I beg your pardon, I told you my master was within, but I was deceiv'd I find.

Sir Amb. You lie, Sir, you were not deceiv'd, he is within I know—Here's another of the tricks they play in this cursed town—not content with galloping post haste themselves to the devil, but they must drag their servants with them; well! if lying be sinful,

ful, Mr. Risk, you'll all be in a hopeful way in the next world—you may tell him I'll call again in the course of the day; when his hair-dresser has attended him, perhaps I may be permitted to have that honour.

[Exit Sir Ambrose.]

Mr. Hammond and Miss Oglewell at Breakfast.

Miss Ogl. Here, take your coffee. Apropos, they tell me that your uncle has been here; I hope not, for really I shudder at the name of an uncle, they are so much given to be censorious; besides you know I am not much accustom'd to restraint.

Ham. Why, truly, madam, I must confess, your conduct has been pretty much at large [Enter Risk] is my uncle gone; Risk.

Risk. He is, Sir.

Ham. Then get my things to dress [rising].

[Exit Risk.]

Miss Ogl. Well, but my dear, I have a favour to beg of you. My losses at play have lately been very great, and if you do not assist me with your purse, I must be ruin'd.

Ham. Madam, the fortune of a nabob if you game so—

Miss Ogl. Game so, and for whose credit do I game so, pray? Do not all the people say, my Lord Dash's mistress is a delightful woman? nothing to compare to Earl Spatter's, cries another; psha! exclaims a third, why Hammond's mistress plays five times deeper than either of them.

Ham. It is a pre-eminence, madam, that I do not at all aspire to; besides, the little ready money I have is dedicated to relieve the immediate distresses of a friend.

Miss Ogl. Ridiculous; people in this age have a thousand ways of putting off their distress'd friends, and yet appearing kind at the same time; for instance
now,

now, when you meet your friend, can't you start and cry, ah my dear Sir, I'm sorry I cannot accommodate you, I thought I had the money at home, but was mistaken; if it will do a month hence—

Ham. Madam, I confess the folly I betray'd in preferring you to an amiable woman, may authorise the worst opinion you can form of me; but now sunk as I am, I have still sense enough not to esteem that man fit to live who could with cruel calmness bear to see, and shut his purse-strings on a friend's distresses.

Miss Ogl. Hey day, you are going into heroicks; pray leave off blank verse, or if you must talk it, seek your poor dull cast-off wife.

Ham. Madam, she was every way your superior, and I own the justice of the world in saying I used her more like a monster than a husband.

Miss Ogl. And served her right too, for the world must do you the justice to own, she made you a monster of a husband, you understand me—

Ham. Madam that object is sacred, and in my presence must not be profaned; till you can find a fitter subject for your wit, be silent; or if you must give vent to such degrading scandal, I must request permission to retire. [Exit Hammond.]

Miss Ogl. Adieu! Romantick blockhead! Let me consider, his fortune has lately been very much impaired; I shall only be an incumbrance to him; and thank Heaven his extravagance has furnished me with the means of living handsomely. I'll leave him then—but what a vile part am I acting—psha! and shall I become a sentimental fool too? no, Let me imitate the examples of my betters and sacrifice my gratitude at the shrine of my interest.

[Exit Miss Oglewell.]

SCENE

SCENE IV. *Mrs. Hammond's Lodgings.*

Lucy and Mrs. Hammond.

Lucy. Nay, madam, do not weep so; tho' poverty—

Mrs. Ham. It is not my poverty I weep; when in the arms of affluence, I knew how to despise my wealth; but why should want of riches render virtuous poverty a mark for pamper'd vice to shoot at?

Lucy. Ah, madam, forget last night's adventure.

Mrs. Ham. Forget, idle wish; none but a mother can conceive what it is to see an infant in distress; when the rude ministers of savage cruelty dragg'd me, bereft of sense, without these doors, my children's shrieks recall'd me to a sense of misery more poignant than all the dreadful tribes of hunger or distress.

Lucy. I trembled for you, but Oh I never shall forget the good young man who like an angel interposed to save you.

Mrs. Ham. May angels hover round his pillow; for those who feel for others, know a lesson which often hard distress is forced to teach the greatest portion of mankind [*a knock*] hark, most probably 'tis he, he said he'd call.

Enter Delmar.

Del. Madam, I would not seem presuming.

Mrs. Ham. Sir, the obligation—

Del. Madam, erase it from your memory.

Mrs. Ham. As much as poverty and gratitude can pay, pray condescend to take. I have a husband, Sir,
—O Hammond, Hammond.

Del.

Del. Hammond! is that your husband's name? then hear me, I yet may do you service; your husband, ruin'd and torn by conscience, is perhaps this moment hurrying to a prison.

Mrs. Ham. Merciful Heaven! Oh tell me where he is.

Del. A moment's patience; I have myself been instrumental to his ruin, but thank Heaven, I yet can make some recompence. Here, madam, take this pocket-book, you'll find in that a title to your uncle's estate, which your deluded husband has been cheated of; this I will appear to prove, and so shall my confederates.

Mrs. Ham. Oh heavens! teach me, teach me how to thank you, Sir.

Del. I have not deserved your thanks, but may hereafter; I was not born the tool of villany, 'twas chance, not inclination, cast me in this sphere; but I will this moment make such a recompence as shall restore me to my native dignity, and, I dare hope, to your esteem. [Exit Delmar.]

Mrs. Ham. Thus I find it is a truth that tho' heaven may for a moment afflict, yet in the end it never fails to give a recompence to suffering innocence—but alas! my husband in poverty! O Lucy, I own my boasted fortitude gives way, and all the woman occupies my heart; yes, yes, 'tis nature bids me fly.

Lucy. Nay, now pray, madam, don't obey her. O madam, a man who could forsake you—

Mrs. Ham. May upon reflection blush at having done so; my soul's above revenge; a virtuous woman will by her tenderness heap deeper anguish on an offending husband, than if she rack'd her brain to find his punishment. I'll wound him that way, 'tis the noblest vengeance.

Lucy. O Madam, you are too good.

Mrs. Ham.

ALL ASLEEP AT NOON.

Mrs. Ham. No, Lucy, 'tis my duty prompts me to preserve a man to whom I have made the awfulest of vows; for,

Whate'er the tenor of the husband's life,
Obedient meekness suits the virtuous wife.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

Enter Sir Ambrose and Risk.

Sir Amb. A fine piece of business this!—So my nephew runs into all manner of extravagancies, and then calmly writes me word, that if I don't bear the weight of them, he must go to jail.

Risk. Alas! Sir, it is the alternative.

Sir Amb. Well, but let me hear how he came into this situation. If it was occasioned by the duplicity of others, my fortune is at his disposal. What widow has he assisted? what orphan?

Risk. Alas! Sir, the gaming table——

Sir Amb. The gaming table! Then I renounce him. The man whose feeling for his fellow creatures betrays him into destruction, deserves our sympathy; but it is wasted on the wretch who is so careless of his happiness, as to permit it to depend upon a game of chance.

Risk. Oh, Sir!—but then his houses, and his horses, and his gardens—

Sir Amb. His gardens! Yes, ornamented with a parcel of wooden deities, to remind him of his own scull. Had he laid out his ground as I have done, I might have forgiven him: instead of raising a pleasing subject to the eye, I have excited a generous emotion in the heart. I have raised a monument in the middle of my garden, the ornaments of which record the actions of those brave fellows who have so honourably distinguished themselves, by dying to
C preserve

preserve us; and not a drop of rains falls on it, but I think that Heaven is bestowing those tears to their remembrance, which ought to have fallen from their ungrateful countrymen.

Risk. Why, Lord, Sir, your garden must look as dismal as a country church-yard.

Sir Amb. A church-yard! aye; and I am, if possible, more proud of such a church-yard, than half our modern nobility are of their *private theatres*. On whom can we so well bestow our riches, as on those who have bled to preserve them?—But I am interrupting you—go on.

Risk. Sir, you may imagine a person of your nephew's fortune and figure, must necessarily be led into intrigues; and the ladies never think the worse of a man for parting with his money with a good grace.

Sir Amb. Intrigues!—I shall burst with indignation.

Risk. Lord, Sir! all your surprise proceeds from ignorance of this town. Why, we have women with charms enough to attract even you, Sir.

Sir Amb. D—n me, if I don't think that man the meanest of all scoundrels, who could contentedly deprive a poor female of that treasure, for which, if he had the wealth of kingdoms, he could never make her retribution; so tell my nephew; tell him, at the same time, too, that I renounce him. Make me no answer, Risk, but take him back that message.—*[Exit Risk.]*—Yes, yes, I'll go home and alter my will directly. Poor Adelina! had she liv'd—But this spendthrift shall not inherit a farthing from me. Well! the wickedness of this world is enough to turn an old man's brain. I'll go to sea again; I will, old as I am, and as my native country will not now need my assistance to humble her haughty foe, I'll offer it to that glorious northern Monarch, who so gallantly bore a defeat to insure a victory, and whose brave
and

ALL ASLEEP AT NOON.

34

and manly conduct is become the admiration of the world.

[Exit Sir Amb.

S C E N E VI.

Enter Morecraft.

Mor. Well! I think I have done for Hammond: I have sent all his creditors after him open mouth'd, like a pack of hounds after a hare in full cry; but where can this young man be, a blockhead, to be absent at the very time I stand so much in need of him? This old fellow's arrival will destroy all my schemes, unless (*producing a letter*) this letter saves me.

Enter Delmar.

In what have you been employing yourself, Sir?

Delm. In what was never your employment—
doing good.

Mor. How now! Dare you again assume those airs?

Delm. I dare be honest, Sir.

Mor. Have a care, lest you pay dearly for your honesty.—Sir Ambrose Crab, this Hammond's uncle, is arrived.

Delm. Then justice comes with him.

Mor. Is this the consequence of all my precepts?

Delm. Your precepts, Sir, nothing but abject misery could ever make me listen to, and that, by Heaven, I'd rather suffer, than any longer be compelled to hear them; for I am now convinced, that riches, purchased at the price of *virtue*, are only meant as *torments* to their owners.

Mor. Very well; but let my riches convince—

Delm. Sir, your riches I despise; your precepts I abhor and renounce; for your money only reminds me of the pangs by which it must be purchased.

Mor. Sir, learn the difference—

C 2

Delm.

Delm. The difference, Sir, is this—Fortune with us has play'd her common trick, giving some the heart to do a generous action, but denying to place the means in their hands; and to many more she has plac'd the means in their hands, without the heart to attempt it.

Mor. I'll talk to you no more, Sir; you soon shall feel me. Remember Hammond's fate and tremble.

[*Exit Mor.*

Delm. Away, poor villain! Sir Ambrose is in town; it may not yet be too late to save us all from ruin; but should——let me not doubt while I am acting right; why should I fear success? for though fortune should frown on my honest endeavours, in my own heart I shall find an inevitable reward.

[*Exit Delmar.*

Enter Hammond.

Ham. The dreaded moment is arrived that buries me in ruin! That Morecraft should deceive me!—he who appeared so generous!—D—nation! what an animal is man! Ha! who comes here? The unhappy girl that I've ruin'd!

Enter Miss Oglewell.

Alas! Maria, all my hopes are flown.

Miss Ogle. Indeed, you have nothing but fortitude to trust to.

Ham. But how can you support the rigors of my fate?

Miss Ogle. The rigors of your fate! Lord bless me! I don't understand you. Why, you unreasonable creature, you surely cannot expect me to do penance with you any longer! I have lived with you in your prosperity a great while, without loving you, and you cannot possibly imagine that I should be such a fool as to remain with you when you have no longer any thing to gild the pill.

Ham.

ALL ASLEEP AT NOON.

13

Ham. Fire and fury !

Miss Ogle. What, in a passion ! and before a woman too ! O fie ! Well, the officers are in your house. I shall really be sorry to quit it, my apartments were so very pretty. Well, adieu ! When you remove to your new lodgings, I shall send to enquire how you are. Good bye, love. [*Exit Ogle.*

Ham. This is too much ! Deserted by my friend, my mistress, every one ! Fool ! fool ! Where are my riches ? *Gone !*—Where are my children ? *Gone !*—Where is my wife ? *Gone !*—Where is my peace ? *Gone for ever !*

Enter Mrs. Hammond.

Mrs. Ham. Oh ! say not so. You have still a faithful friend, a tender loving wife ! Your uncle, won by my tears, has just discharg'd the officers, and paid your debts.

Ham. Heaven ! can it be !

Mrs. Ham. Look up, and mutually exchange forgiveness. Oh ! if I ever have offended you, believe me I have suffered for my fault. Long, with my little infants, have I roam'd a wandering outcast from those sheltering arms, and borne such sufferings, both of mind and body, that even now I shudder at the thoughts of them.

Ham. I cannot bear it !

Mrs. Ham. Oh ! turn your eyes this way — behold your faithful wife, unconquered by unkindness and disdain, kneeling an humble suppliant at your feet.

Ham. Adelina, the injuries I've heap'd on thee, are daggers here. I own, Oh cruel word ! that I deserve to lose you. [*Going.*

Mrs. Ham. Stay, cruel man ! you must not, shall not leave me. Nay, if no other tie can move your pity, Oh ! let the name of father call forth tears of affection. Two little smiling cherubs beg your stay ; they long to throw their arms about your neck, and make you own at length you are a father.

Enter

Enter Sir Ambrose with children and Delmar.

Ham. [*embracing them*] My uncle too, oh shame.

Sir Amb. Yes, your uncle, Sir, tho' I must blush to own you. Adelina, come to my arms, more dear to me than ever.

Mrs. Ham. Not till you promise to receive my husband.

Sir Amb. From Delmar's account I expected this piece of generosity; I own it goes against me to forgive him, but as happiness depends upon it, take her once again Sir, and learn to value her.

Ham. I hope shortly to convince you, Sir, how sincerely I do.

Del. to Ham. With respect to your fortune, Sir, I can give you ev'ry satisfaction; the usurer who defrauded you by command of Sir Ambrose is doom'd to wait the will of injur'd justice; for myself I shall ever think with pleasure, that I have the power of relieving your amiable wife. I might have been rich, but I prefer the sensations of this moment to the wealth of the universe.

Sir Amb. Give me your hand, young man; such honesty ought not to want a patron; you shall live with me at my country house, to which we'll all retire; and if you ever meet a girl you love, fortune shall never be an obstacle to your happiness.

Del. I accept your offer, Sir, with thanks.

Hammond (coming forward).

Taught by these truths, oh may each husband prove
The first of heaven's sweet gifts, connubial love;
Let trifling fashion spread her lure in vain,
And may no husband be deceiv'd again,
Convinc'd the greatest blessing of his life,
Are faith untainted and a virtuous wife.

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